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Impact of Iyake Suspended Lake Tourist Centre on Socio-Economic Activities of Ado-Awaye Residents in Iseyin Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria

By

ADEROUNMU Rasheed Adesoye
Department of Geography,
School of Secondary Education (Arts and Social Sciences Programmes),
Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate

Abstract
The study examines the impact of tourism at Iyake Suspended Lake on the residents' socio-economic activities in the study area. Data for this study were acquired from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources of data include questionnaire, group discussion and oral interview. Secondary data were sourced from the related existing journals, pamphlets as well as some pieces of relevant information from the internet. Data were analysed using frequency tables and percentages. This study also employed descriptive statistic tools such as histogram, pie chart and bar chat for the analysis using SPSS version 27.0. It was established that tourism at Iyake Suspended has greatly impacted the households particularly in job creation, marketing development and improvement of social facilities. It was also deduced that tourism has contributed to the households' increasing income generation with self-comfort. Tourism as reflected in the findings built up friendship between tourists and residents with increasing innovations capable of enhancing culture, tradition and residents' living standards. It was therefore suggested that the youths and the elders should play their own part in self-help community development works for more patronage and residents' self-reliability. It was also recommended that government at both the local and state levels should be more concerned in transport facilities development and ensure their readiness to increase fund to the tourist center for more tourists' attraction and beauty.

Keywords: *Tourism, Socio-Economic, Activities, Iyake Suspended Lake, Residents*

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Introduction

In the global system, mountains are essential parts of recreation and tourism that cannot be ignored. They contribute meaningfully to social well-being through exploration. This attribute as explained by Thomas, Gill and Hartmann (2006), makes them some of the most attractive tourism destinations globally with an annual influx of 500 million tourists. The income associated with tourism comes from various sources including park entrance fees, guided tours, accommodation, transportation and other related services. The revenue helps fund local infrastructure projects and community development initiatives, fostering overall economic growth in a region.

The area of concern of land resources management analyst is to create enabling environment for more understanding on the need to recognise mountain resources as potentially encouraging urban development. Studies on the impact of tourism, according to Robertson and Hull (2001), have shown that a destination's population recognises economic and social benefits and costs of tourism on their community and lives. Nigeria is one of the countries with significant and diverse natural, geographical, historical and cultural heritage assets such as Iyake Suspended Lake (ISL) within mountain regions, yet untapped. This destination image, according to Kozak, Bigne, Gonzalez and Andreu (2003), is closely linked to the attractiveness and competitiveness.

Mountain tourism facility usually facilitates development through the increasing international and domestic tourists to the host's community and that encourages interaction as well as the associated marketing development. Tourism, according to Ojo (2014), has been a major driver of socio-economic development in Western division of Nigeria; it is an alternative strategy for sustainability and diversification of economy for government policy. The regions of mountain tourism with high tourists' attraction usually encourage high level of socio-economic development. This, according to Kruk and Banskota, (2007), has drawn the attention of geographers to the mountain tourism product, which consists of a system of attractions and support facilities providing goods and services to maximise the satisfaction of tourists. This study therefore attempts to examine the impact of tourism at Iyake Suspended Lake (ISL) on socio-economic development of the community.

Literature review

The impact of tourism varies as it plays an important and certainly positive role in socio-economic development in the destination countries and local communities surrounding the area of destination. Some of the advantages of tourism to the local economy include employment opportunities, and cultural awareness and understanding. Studies on the impacts of tourism by Todaro and Smith (2012), have shown that a destination's population recognises economic and social benefits and costs of tourism on their community and lives. Economic benefits, as described by Inbakaran and Jackson (2006), are usually regarded as the most important benefits of tourism and include increased employment opportunities, income generation, tax revenue and improved standard of living. The prospective of a tourism destination to attract tourists is dependent on the spatial distribution of attractions and support facilities (Fang, Qin, Ding and Yang, 2009). Mountain tourism, according to Nepal and Chipeniuk (2005), is a certain kind of tourism activity undertaken in mountain region characterised by distinctive attractions, special activities, unique services, well-designed infrastructure and support facilities.

Mountain tourism provides tangible benefits as regards the sustenance of residents' cultural, economic, physical durability and wellbeing (Ibrahim, 2015).Beyond the economic potentials of mountain tourism, it contributes to the physical, cultural, social and ecological

development of a mountain destination (Todaro & Smith, 2012). Tourism according to Tichaawa and Mhlanga, (2015) ensures the sustainability of the ecological resources in a mountainous region. However, various factors such as diversity, fragility, aesthetic, difficult access, niche contribute to the choice of a mountain region for tourism activities (Gursoy, Chi, and Dyer, 2010). Tourism can lead to increase in standard of living; increases in daily income; learning about each other's business; facilitation of friendships; source of marketing tools for local business owners, peace and understanding, among others. This according to Ibrahim, (2015) call for an increase in residents' involvement in mountain tourism's planning and development based on their cultural values, customs and available mountain resources.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the potential impact of tourism at Iyake Suspended Lake on the households' socio-economic development of Ado-Awaye community in Iseyin Local Government Area in Oyo State.

Objectives of the study are to:

i. evaluate the existing contributions of Iyake Suspended Lake to the residents' standard of living in the study area.
ii. analyse the degree of attractiveness of both the international and domestic tourists to Iyake Suspended Lake host's community.
iii. find out the level at which tourism in Iyake Suspended Lake contributes to the households' socio-economic development in the study area.
iv. determine the level at which tourism at Iyake Suspended Lake embraces the households' cultural activities for community sustainable developments.

Research Questions

- Does the natural occurrence of Iyake Suspended Lake at the destination add any value to the living standard of residents in the community and the surrounding settlements?
- Does the Iyake Suspended Lake acts as an ingredient toward development of socio-economic activities in the study area?
- Does the existence of Iyake Suspended Lake in the destination pave way for attraction of both the international and domestic tourists?
- Does the Iyake Suspended Lake act as a source of embracing the households' cultural activities for community sustainable development?

Statement of the Problem

In most of the rural settlements of developing countries, the growth of economy is very sluggish. This could be attributed to a poor handling of the existing mountain resources. The situation in the mountainous regions of Ado-Awaye community is not different. Many of the rural settlements in the South-Western Nigeria are endowed with good quality mountain resources yet untapped and these are capable of supporting human well-being and their developmental aspirations with no exclusion of better economy. Iyake Suspended Lake has all it takes if adequately put to use to liberate the dwellers at the host's community and the surrounding settlements financially. Not until recently when the management of Iyake Suspended Lake was put under the custody of a consultant firm, the ISL was under funded. This study therefore attempts to assess the position of residents concerning the tourism influence at Iyake Suspended Lake on households' socio-economic characteristics in the study area.

Geography of the Study Area

Iyake Suspended Lake is located in mountainous region of Ado-Awaye and it is about 20 kilometers west of Iseyin on a rocky ridge commonly referred to as the "sleeping lion". It is the only mountain top "suspended lake" in Africa (Ibrahim, 2015). It falls within Latitudes 07º 48"Nand 07º 54"N and Longitudes 03º 18"E and 03º 30"E. The lake and its surrounding wetlands provide habitats for diverse plants and animals including threatened species such as the African mahogany and the diamond back terrapin. In addition to its ability to render habitats that sustain biodiversity, the site plays a crucial role in water purification, groundwater recharge and erosion control as well as climate regulation. These functions are vital for maintaining ecosystem balance, supporting wildlife and delivering essential benefits to the surrounding communities.

There is no major river within the catchment. The area is mainly characterized by rocks with a dynamic structure and impeccable display such as the Ishage rock, foot of elders, etc., which could be resourceful for tourism attraction. The study area has an elevation of 433 m above the sea level with a maximum annual rainfall of1790-1850 mm (Ibrahim, 2015). It is characterized by an equatorial climate with dry and wet seasons and relatively high humidity. The dry season lasts from November to March while the wet season starts in April and ends in October. The average daily temperature ranges between 20^0C and 35^0C almost throughout the entire year.

Method of Data Analysis

This study examined the effect of tourism at Iyake Suspended Lake on socio-economic development of the host's community and surrounding settlements. Data for this study encompasses both the primary and secondary sources. Data like demographic characteristics of the respondents and household's perception about the tourism at Iyake Suspended Lake were sourced primarily in the study area. The residents' position about the degree of tourist's attractiveness to the host's community, the economic improvement perceived by the households about tourism was also acquired primarily. The degree at which the community's tourism necessitates socio-economic development has equally been gathered from primary sources for the purpose of this study. The household's opinion as regards the different ways by which the beauty of tourism can be improved upon in the community was also harvested from the respondents.

Secondary data were obtained from various pamphlets, existing journals and textbooks of different kinds. Other pieces of relevant information were also obtained from the internet. The host's community of Iyake Suspended Lake comprises of 3 different Road networks namely: the Trunk A Sokoto –Badagry express road (Federal road), Trunk B Awaye-Okeho Road (State road) and some Access roads (Local road).

300 copies of questionnaires were administered in the study area to the respondents. 100 copies were administered to the respondents whose houses are accessible by Trunk A road, 100 copies were used to obtain data from the respondents whose houses are accessible by Trunk B road, and the remaining 100 copies were used to collect answers from the respondents whose houses are accessible by local government roads (Access road), making a total of 300 copies altogether.

100 respondents were selected along the Trunk A road, 100 respondents were chosen along the Trunk B road and 100 respondents were also chosen along the local government road using random sampling techniques. 292 questionnaires were correctly filled and these

were retrieved from the respondents for the results analysis of this study. The remaining 8 copies were either not properly filled and were discarded.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1.0: Distribution of demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Variable	Location						Total	
	Trunk A road		Trunk B road		Access road			
Sex	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Male	35	12	45	15.4	34	11.6	114	39
Female	62	21.2	53	18.2	63	21.6	178	61
Total	97	33.2	98	33.6	97	33.2	292	100
Age (Years)								
Below 30	26	8.9	23	7.9	23	7.9	72	24.7
Between 31-64	43	14.7	44	15.1	58	19.9	135	46.2
65 and Above	30	10.3	28	9.6	27	9.2	85	29.1
Total	99	33.9	95	32.5	98	33.5	292	100
Educational Level								
None	41	15.4	28	11.6	43	16.4	116	39.7
Primary	30	11	35	12	20	6.8	81	27.7
Secondary	22	4.5	34	8.6	29	7.9	85	29.1
Tertiary	2	1.7	2	1.7	6	2.4	10	3.4
Total	95	32.5	99	33.9	98	33.6	292	100
Occupation								
Farming	44	15.1	40	13.7	34	11.6	118	40.4
Trading	29	9.9	36	12.3	40	13.7	105	36
Artisan	18	6.2	14	4.8	5	1.7	37	12.7
Professional	3	1	3	1	9	3.1	15	5.1
Others	5	1.7	4	1.4	8	2.7	17	5.8
Total	99	33.9	97	33.2	96	32.1	292	100

Source: Field survey, March 2024.

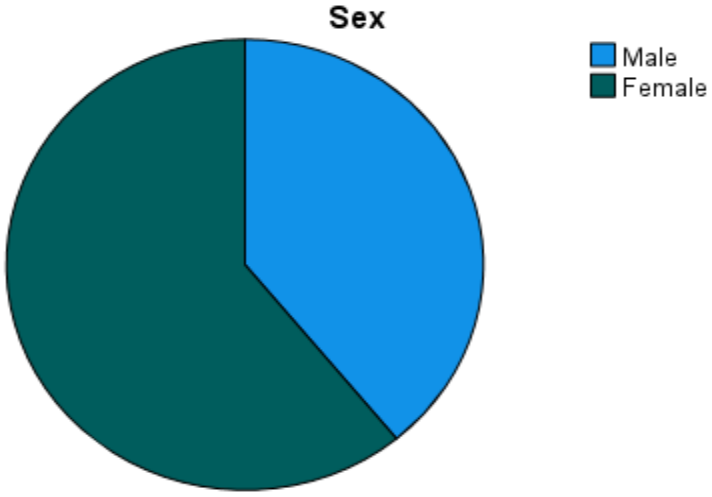


Figure 1.0: Pie Chart Showing the Sex of Respondents in the Study Area

Table 1.0 revealed the frequency distribution of the sex of the respondents in the study area. The majority of the residents have good impression about the existence of Iyake Suspended Lake considering their enthusiastic reaction and their willingness to supply useful information for the purpose of this study. In support of this, the results in Figure 1.0 showed that 61% of the respondents were females while 39% were males in the study area.

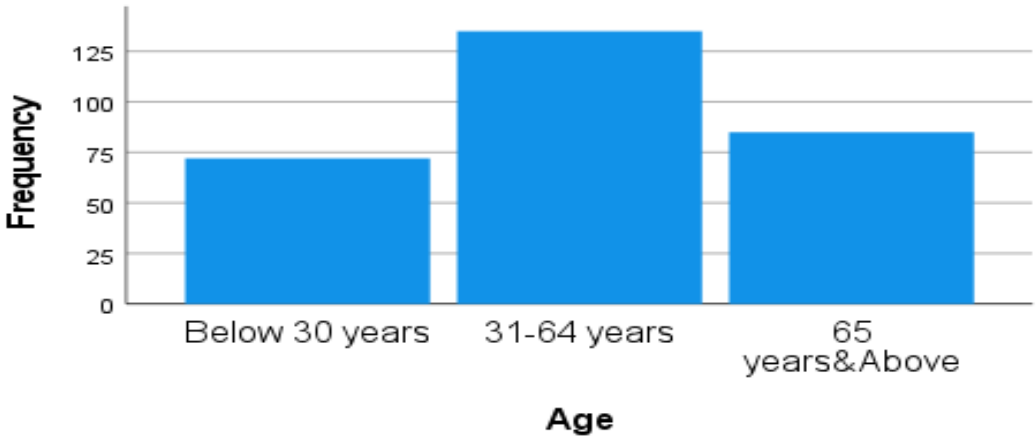


Figure 2.0: Bar Chart Showing the Age of Respondents in the Study Area

In Table 1.0, most of the respondents have all it takes in terms of their age group to play active role in the labour market taking into cognizance the impacted tourism benefit at Iyake Suspended Lake on the residents. The largest number of active age group has been positively influenced by the presence of tourist centre in the study area. The result in Figure 2.0 supported this by manifestation of the fact that 46.2% of the respondents fall within the age categories 31 to 64 years. 29.1% of the respondents were elderly and these people have attained age 65 years and above. One of the elderly men that spoke with us during the course of this study embraced Iyake Suspended Lake as one of the natural gifts and a treasure to the community. He stressed further that the natural endowment site has proved beyond reasonable doubt as a spiritual source of healing for many people that were sick. Only few people of about 24.7% of the respondents were below the age 30.

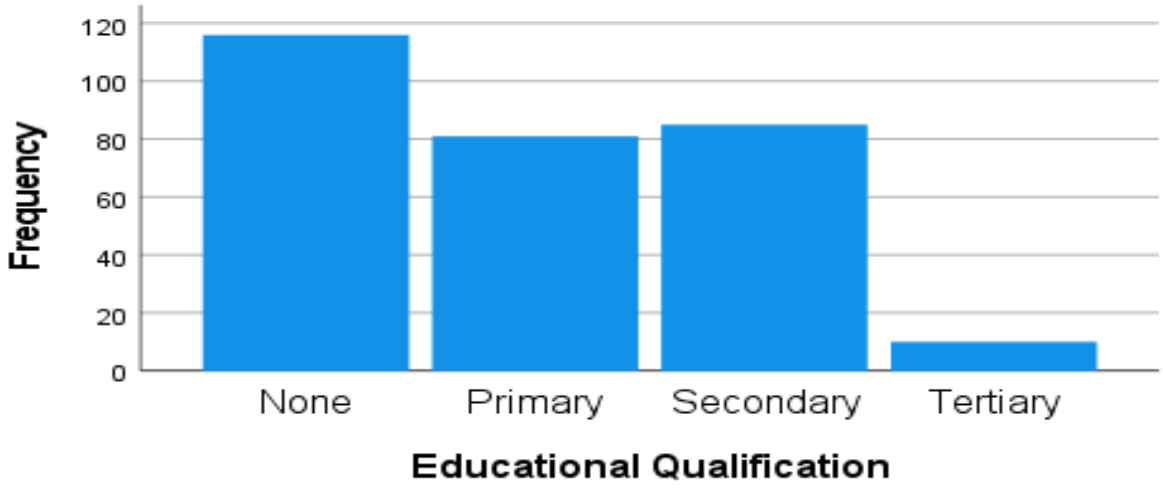


Figure 3.0: Bar Chart Showing the Educational Qualification of the Respondents in the Study Area

Table 1.0 showed the frequency distribution of educational qualification of the respondents in the study area. The results in Figure 3.0 showed that, 39.7% of the respondents were residents with no educational qualification. 29.1% of the respondents obtained primary school leaving certificate in the study area. The respondents of about 27.7% obtained senior school certificate in the study area. Figure 3.0 showed that only few of the residents attended tertiary institution with 3.4% of respondents acquired varying degree of qualifications from distinctive higher institutions of learning. Although they were not many but there level of understanding about the tourist attractive center under consideration was superb. Some of them even told us that this Iyake Suspended Lake was recently handed over to the consultant firm by the Oyo State Government for proper management.

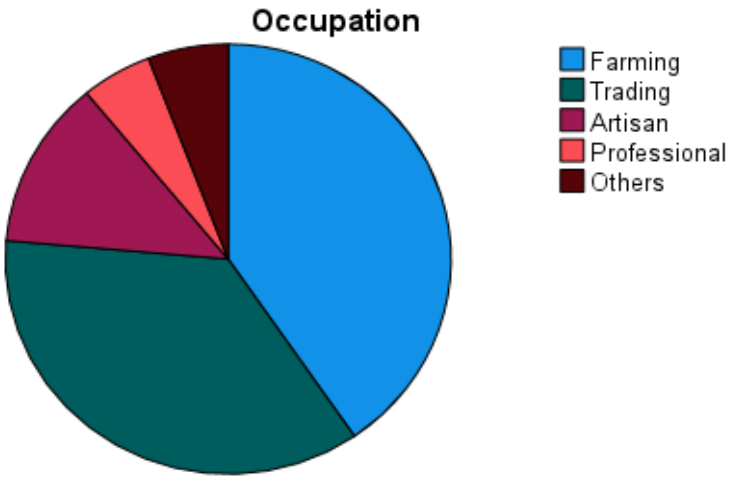


Figure 4.0: Pie Chart Showing the Occupation of the Respondents in the Study Area

Table 1.0 revealed the frequency distribution of occupation of the respondents in the study area. The results in Figure 4.0 showed that 40.4% of the respondents were majorly farmers and actively involved in agricultural practicing. This was obvious considering the agricultural farmlands surrounding the tourist's attractive site in the community. At a glance on the crest of the tourist center's site in its peak the residents' agricultural farmland could be seen looking down ward in the lowland with varieties of planted crops (e,g. cassava, maize, etc.). 36% of the respondents were traders who engaged in micro enterprises businesses such like the sales of daily needs (e.g. tooth paste, soap, etc.).

One of the women that were food sellers in the community happily explained to us that the presence of Iyake Suspended Lake has greatly contributed to their well-being due to high patronage. This according to her mostly occurred when the community received large number of students among other tourists visiting the place at a time. 12.7% of the respondents were artisans (e.g. Automobile mechanic, Vulcanizing workers, etc.) most of which having their shops accessible by the roads with increasing patronage receives from the tourists. 5.8% of the respondents were engaged in other services (e.g. motor cycle riding, shoe repairs, etc.) with high patronage from tourists and the increasing self-comfort. Only few of the residents were professionals (e.g. horticulturists, fine artists, etc.) with 5.1% of the respondents in the study area. These few categories of people have been keeping the beauty and the aesthetic outlook of the tourist center with the increasing self-profit and household's improving living standard.

Research Question One: Does the natural occurrence of Iyake Suspended Lake at the destination add any value to the living standard of residents in the community and the surrounding settlements?

Table 2.0: Distribution of households' opinion about the existing community value added of Iyake Suspended Lake.

Variable	SA		A		SD		D	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Aesthetic arrangement of land use activities highly visible.	140	47.9	56	19.2	43	14.8	53	18.2
Iyake Suspended Lake water spiritually inclined.	144	49.3	53	18.2	41	14.	54	18.5
Preservation of rocky cultural heritages made possible	155	53.1	47	16.1	38	13	52	17.8
Hilly site traditional worship highly encouraging.	142	48.6	59	20.2	48	16.4	43	14.7

Source: Field Survey, March 2024.

Table 2.0 above revealed the frequency distribution of households' perception concerning the prospect that Iyake Suspended Lake is procuring to its host's community. It was obvious that the aesthetic arrangements of land use activities (e.g. building, road, parking space, Step cases to tourist's site etc.) at the tourist center are all in attribution with value attached to it. This assertion was made known to us by 51.4% of the respondents in the study area.

It was glaring that the interest that the residents associated with nature is enormous. This was seen in the additional attractive zones (e.g. Ishage, Foots of elder, Agbomofunyake, Elephant tree, Iya Alaro Lake etc.) carefully inscribed and labeled one after the other for easy identification of natural and cultural items in the study area. These attractive zones, according to 53.1% of the respondents, would be seen one after the other at every glanceon a way upon climbing the hill of Iyake Suspended Lake. This study presented that 49.3% of the respondents described the lake under study as having constant water supply throughout the year and that is capable of healing the sick people by drinking.48.6% of the respondents explained that apart from the fact that the upland region serves the purpose of tourism, it equally serves as a site for community preservative cultural and historical heritages.

Research Question Two: Does the Iyake Suspended Lake act as an ingredient toward development of socio-economic activities in the study area?

Table 3.0: Distribution of households' perception about the benefits of Iyake Suspended on the community

Variable	SA		A		SD		D	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Job creation was highly facilitated	145	49.7	55	18.8	58	19.9	34	11.6
Marketing development highly encouraging	153	52.4	51	17.5	47	16.1	41	14
Income generation strongly boosting up the household's sustainability level	137	46.9	48	16.4	58	19.9	49	16.8
Tourist site allows for possible social facilities in the community	141	48.3	45	15.4	59	20.2	47	16.1

Source: Field Survey, March 2024

Table 3.0 above showed the residents' views about the contribution of tourist attractive center under study to the well-being of the community dwellers. 49.7% of the respondents stated that most of the residents have been getting mini jobs in the area of tourism for a sustainable standard of living in the study area. This supports the idea of World Tourism Organisation and International Labour Organisation (2014) that the jobs offered by tourism are not only a source of livelihood but also contribute to skill development and capacity building within the community. 52.4% of the respondents stated that the development of market is associated with the existing tourist attractive centre in the study area.

An elderly woman in the community narrated the cases of some tourists visited the tourist center on tourism basis and consistently asking about the available food canteens especially those with the local foods (e.g. pounded yam, amala, fufu, etc.) and drinks (e.g. beers, soft drinks etc.). This, according to her, led to the emergence of different food sellers' shops as well as beer parlours with increasing market development for a better living standard among the residents. It was recognised by 48.3% of the respondents that social facilities (e.g. hotels, guest houses etc.) were springing up increasingly as a means to meet the demand for accommodation among the tourists. The income generation from various commercial activities was impressive as expressed by 46.9% of the respondents in the study area. This supports the expression of Ibrahim (2015) that the influx of international and domestic tourists generates substantial revenue, which is crucial for the local economy

Question Three: Does the existence of Iyake Suspended Lake in the community paves way for attraction of both the international and domestic tourists?

Table 4.0: Distribution of households' attitude as regards the chances of Iyake Suspended Lake paving way for International and domestic tourists to the host's community.

Variable	SA		A		SD		D	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
The chances of people visiting ISL on tourism increasingly amazing.	148	50.7	53	18.2	45	15.4	46	15.8
The curiosity level of most tourists upon reaching ISL's site usually impressing.	168	57.5	41	14	42	14.4	41	14
The chances of tourists recording and filming some geographical phenomena at ISL site are increasingly surprising.	150	51.4	59	20.2	36	12.3	47	16.1
The level at which international visitors admiring the tourist's site highly superb.	145	49.7	62	21.2	51	17.5	34	11.6

Source: Field Survey, March 2024.

Table 4.0 above revealed the frequency distribution of residents' insight about the tourism activities of tourists at Iyake Suspended Lake in the study area. 57.5% of the respondents stated that they have witnessed some cases where the tourists visit the community with the inquisition about the existing cultural heritage in the study area. This is in line with the findings of Nepal and Chipeniuk (2005), that the core tourism activities are cultural, recreational, sports and relaxation, which are the primary motivations of tourists visiting these places. The intensive effort of most tourists to get more familiar with the community tradition paved way for friendship between tourists and residents on different occasions. The area of interest of many tourists used to be protected by the staff at the tourist center. One of the workers at the tourist center explained to us that tourists usually have fun

by taking record of important places at each time of visit. 51.4% of the respondents indicated that most of the time the tourists visited Iyake Suspended Lake they find it interesting by filming and videoing different phenomena in the study area. 50.7% of the respondents stated that the calibers of tourists that were witnessed in their consistence visit to the tourist center are those of school students and staff from varying degree of primary, secondary and tertiary Institutions. 49.7% of the respondents emphasised that local tourists were more than international ones in the history of tourist's patronage in the study area.

Research Question Four: Does the Iyake Suspended Lake act as a source of embracing the households' cultural activities for community sustainable development?

Table 5.0: Distribution of households' opinion about the role of Iyake Suspended Lake on cultural activities.

Variable	SA		A		SD		D	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Accelerating growth of crop species and farming system.	151	51.7	50	17.1	48	16.4	43	14.7
High level of cultural materials like bead, calabash carving etc., being facilitated.	146	50	51	17.5	53	18.2	42	14.4
Tourist patronage promotes community tradition e.g. Egungun festival, drums, etc.	158	54.1	48	16.4	40	13.7	46	15.8
Tourists maintain and promote friendship with the residents.	139	47.6	64	21.9	45	15.4	44	15.1

Source: Field Survey, March 2024

Table 5.0 above revealed the frequency distribution of households' opinion as regards the instrumentality nature of the tourists' patronage to promotion of the households' cultural activities in the study area. 54.1% of the respondents stated that some tourists, in their quest to know more about culture at each moment of their arrival to the community promotes, festivals like Oro, Egungun (Masquerade), etc. in the study area. This concurs with the idea of Kruk and Banskota (2009) that tourism encourages the preservation of local traditions and customs. 51.7% of the respondents conveyed that some of the residents have benefited in farming system through their relationship with tourists. They stressed that some of them were introduced to some species of crops (e.g. hybrid maize seeds, tobacco seeds, etc.) for community well-being. 50% of the respondents explained that it has been part of economic development to Iyake Suspended Lake host's community looking at the increasing demand for local and cultural materials (e.g. beads, designed calabash, etc.) by the tourists at the time of visit. These are some products being produced and supplied by the ethnic groups (e.g. Fulani, Hausa, etc.) living in the neighbouring settlements who in turn purchases some daily needs to their various destinations. This is in consonance with the notion of Thomas and Hartmann (2006) that in tourism, handicrafts, music, dance, and culinary traditions are kept alive and shared with the world to enhancing cultural pride and identity.47.6% of the respondents stated that apart from visitation, some foreign tourists have built their relationships with some residents in the community by enjoying local games (e.g. Ayo-olopon, draft and ludo) commonly played under the trees with them for relaxation.

Conclusion

This study examined the residents' perception about the impact of tourism at Iyake Suspended Lake on socio-economic activities in the study area. It was deduced that the existence of tourist center encouraged high level of job creation, marketing development and

facilitation of social facilities through increasing patronage. It was evident that most of the households that engaged in one petty trading or the other have graciously benefitted from the tourists' patronage. It was established that the tradition and culture of the community have been promoted with greater chances of tourist patronage. It was therefore suggested that the residents find more ways of encouraging more patronage for unending sustainable households' living standard. It was also suggested that the government pump more money to the center for beatification and standard that could enhance the level of patronage for community well-being.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this research work, it is hereby recommended as that the community youths have a role to play in encouraging more patronage to the tourist center as to foster residents' better standard of living. This could be by the youths cooperatively design strategy to solicit financial support from the indigenous people of affluence. This financial assistance, if received, would be used to come out with different sign posts with such inscription indicating 'welcome to Iyake Suspended Lake community'. These could be erected at the distinctive strategic parts of the community roads especially at the entry and exit of the community.

Tourism activities at Iyake Suspended Lake can be improved upon by the residents to enhance its support to the sustainable social and economic development of the community. This should be done by the dwellers encouraging transport facility improvement such as road maintenance through joint effort. This could be done by the elders having a forum for active dissemination of information capable of bringing them together to discuss about the construction of access roads drainage channels as self-help community development works.

The Local Government should be more committed in ensuring quality of roads for better transportation of tourists and the resident's well-being. This will not only encourage adequate financial activities among the residents but also promote a sense of internally generated revenue to the government at local level. The local planning authority should be committed in ensuring that the residents strictly adhere to the building regulation codes for the building and other land use activities arrangement more attractive to the tourists at the time of visit.

The State Government, through its agency, should also ensure adequate monitoring of the consultant firm being saddled with the responsibility of maintaining the tourist center for adequacy. The tourist site requires more funds for beautification and construction of more structures. This could be done by the government agents working together with the traditional rulers of the community to come out with the befitting gallery to show case the community cultural heritages.

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